Remarks/Arguments:

Claim 1 has been amended and is believed to patentably define over the prior art of record; and new Claims 31-38 have been added which depend from Claim 1 and are likewise believed to patentably define over the prior art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration is requested since none of the prior art discloses the present invention.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite an apparatus for recovering projectile material fragments ejected by an impact including a target within a projectile containment chamber and a solvent-soluble granulated material disposed within the containment chamber and completely encompassing at least one side of the target to thereby capture the projectile material fragments.

The Simonetti patent primarily relied upon by the Examiner in the rejection of Claim 1 discloses a ballistic projectile arrester system for use in an indoor shooting gallery. Simonetti provides a granular material as a deceleration mass for projectiles fired from a weapon after the projectiles have passed through a target, and provides an elaborate mechanized system for removal of the projectiles from the granular material and restoration of the cleaned granular material back into service as a deceleration mass for subsequent projectiles. Simonetti is concerned with diminishing lead-related problems, such as lead vapors resulting from projectile fragmentation and the elimination of the fired projectiles from the shooting gallery environment. Simonetti is not concerned with the problem addressed by applicant, that is, the retrieval of projectile fragments for the purpose of conducting a post-impact evaluation of the "as-ejected" characteristics of those residual projectile and erosion products, and is not concerned with the physical state of the retrieved fragments. Simonetti merely provides the granular material as a backdrop to the target to contain those projectiles and fragments for later separation and discard. Simonetti has no reason to completely encompass at least one side of the target with a solvent-soluble granular material as called for in Claim 1, to thereby immediately capture the projectile fragments therein and, in the case of pyrophoric projectile material fragments, also providing for the immediate quenching of those fragments to preserve their "as-ejected" state for subsequent analysis. Accordingly, Claim 1 is considered patentable over the Simonetti patent.

The remaining prior art of record has been considered but does not overcome the above-discussed deficiencies of Simonetti.

Claims 2-11 and 30-38 depend from Claim 1 and are patentable for the reasons given in support of the patentability of Claim 1 as well as for the additional limitations contained therein.

For the above-reasons, Claims 1-11 and 30-38 are believed allowable over the prior art of record and an early notice to such effect is solicited.

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